

They're a real bunch of flyers

Wycombe W. 1, Algerian Airways 1

THE fact that the stands and terraces at Loakes Park were open free gratis and for nothing on Thursday evening indicates that Wycombe Wanderers hardly regarded this friendly encounter as a needle match.

Algerian Airways? Whatever next? The Swiss Navy? The Greenland Ice-Cream Vendors? Or the Norwegian Sand-Dancers Association?

As it turned out, however, Wanderers were given an unexpectedly lively game by the natty-dressed Algerian champions kitted out in shirts with red and yellow narrow vertical stripes and red sleeves. The visitors received plenty of support, too; both from the crowd of several hundred and the 16 substitutes.

Most of the latter managed to get onto the field at some time,

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AT LARGE

so it was a little difficult to keep track of the team.

Wanderers were pretty liberal with the swops, too. John Delaney, Keith Blunt and Charlie Gale were on the terraces in the first half (in "civvies") and on the field in the second half. And it must be quite a time since Delaney wore a number 11 shirt.

Seriously, the Algerians were far from being a joke-of-the-year side. They were fit, fast and efficient; with a little added

striking power they could have sprung more surprises. Keith Searle got little change from a defence master-minded by an ageing but wiry centre half (affectionately christened "Dad" by a programme-less crowd) and their goalkeeper dealt efficiently with a greasy ball in the wet conditions.

Keith Searle put Wanderers ahead from close range after 20 minutes but the ball was slipped under Maskell ten minutes later to complete the scoring.

There were changes galore in the second half, but apart from hitting the posts and the crossbar — the latter with a thunderous header by Delaney — Wanderers didn't get the shooting practice they were seeking.

Anybody looking for a really tenacious inside forward? They couldn't do better than having a few words with the visiting number 10. He'd be an asset to any Isthmian League side.